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THE UNREST IN INDIA CONSIDERED AND DISCUSSED.

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By Gracious Permission

To His Excellency LORD LAMINGTON,
G. C. M. G., G. C. I. & E.,

Governor of Bombay;

*who, during his all too brief control of the administration
of Western India, inspired in all classes and com-
munities entire confidence in his judgment,
fairness, and sympathy.*

PREFACE.

THE Unrest in India, and the political tension which it has engendered, have given food for anxious thought to all patriotic Indians. On the shaping of events during the next few years hangs the peace and prosperity of the great Indian Empire. It seems to me then to be the duty of every Indian to help, so far as in him lies, to an accurate conception of the political forces that are now at work and their general tendency. This little brochure has been written, by one who belongs to no party, in the hope that it may tend to a better understanding of the existing situation.

We live in a short-memoried generation, and the condition of India prior to the establishment of British Rule, and the causes that led to the establishment of that Rule, are well nigh forgotten. I have thought it well, therefore, to add a few general reflections on the rise of British power in India and the estimate of it formed by able foreign critics.

SYED SIRDAR ALI KHAN.

SIRDAR'S MANSIONS,

Bombay, July, 1907.

THE UNREST IN INDIA.

THE BOYCOTT AND ITS TENDENCIES.

AN unfortunate combination of circumstances has identified the present "Unrest in India" with the Swadeshi movement, whereby Swadeshi and Sedition have come to be regarded as synonymous terms. For the purposes of this little brochure, I propose to draw a broad line between those two terms; and to dissociate the cry of Swadeshi from the Sedition which is disturbing the political atmosphere of India and carrying in its wake trouble and vexation to the various communities that form the Great British Indian Empire. At the same time it exhibits

a lack of logic on the part of its promoters akin to the grossest ignorance, not unmixed with ingratitude, as the return our Rulers are receiving for the benignity and progressiveness which have so thoroughly marked the course of British dominion in India. I write as one who has never been identified with party politics, though I have at all times taken a deep interest in following the course of events. As a mere spectator, having no axe of my own to grind, I have had an opportunity of watching the actors on the stage of Swadeshi and Boycott, who each "in his time has played many parts," forgetful apparently of the probabilities with regard to the "last scene of all that ends this strange eventful history" — "mere oblivion."

If the unrest in India could be regarded as the outcome of a wholesome desire on the part of the people for speedier advancement, for improved educational facilities, for a higher and more liberal type of civilization than they at present enjoy, for an even closer tie between the new world of the West and the old world of the East than that which now exists, and for an extension of those benefits which the contact confers, it would

command unstinted approval. If the Extremists sought a remedy for the technical and industrial deficiencies of their race ; if they strove to encourage self-help in commerce and manufactures, the promotion of organized effort within the different castes, the revival of Indian art and Indian literature, and a renewal of the philosophic achievements of the past, then would their programme assuredly obtain—it would assuredly deserve—the sympathy and assistance of all thoughtful men throughout the Empire, both European and Native. Then could we speak benignly of our Ideal of Indian Nationalism, of constitutional reform—aye, of Representative Government,

Unfortunately for India, however, the Boycott aims at none of these things. The avowed object of the Extremists is to abolish British rule and to drive the English out of the country. That is the real trend and purpose of the movement. To do them justice, they do not attempt to disguise their intentions : in their speeches, their pamphlets, their newspaper articles, they make bold declaration of their ambitions and their desires ; indeed, the lack of logic in their Boycott arguments and

the ingratitude of their policy are only too plainly exhibited.

A good deal has been heard lately of the awakening of Asia, of the revival of a spirit of Nationality among Asiatics, and of the advance of Western civilization in Japan; and in a crude, superficial manner the catch-penny propaganda of the Extremists has been attributed to this "new spirit" of the Orient. Surely, if there be any truth in the contention, this "new spirit," as manifested recently in Bengal and the Punjab, must be a poor thing at the best, with ingratitude as its mainspring and retrogression as its policy!

In Japan, the "new spirit" is seen working on bold, manly lines. A small, insignificant nation has sprung suddenly into the status and privileges of a great Power; while the "Colossus of the North" has been humbled in the dust before her advancing armies. The Japanese did not, however, in the hour of their triumph, forget that to England credit was due not only for the efficiency of their battleships, but also for their immunity from foreign intervention; and they promptly entered into a closer alliance with their friends, the British, to whom they owed so much. A great

wave of commercial prosperity has been Japan's reward. There has been no Boycott movement in Japan. On the contrary, realizing as she does that her wonderful advancement during the last few years was brought about entirely by the adoption of Western methods, she has come to the conclusion that she cannot have too many of those methods grafted upon her own mediæval civilisation, and she has Europeanized her legislature, her regiments, her fleet, her systems of trade and commerce. She has opened her ports to European—and especially to English—merchandise. She has, in short, entirely Europeanized herself. There has, indeed, been a "new spirit" at work in the Far East, but that spirit was born of a union between the East and West.

How contemptible, by comparison, is the work of the Extremists of India. For nearly two centuries this great Empire has been progressing, slowly but surely, under British influence. From a conflicting mixture of parts and elements, India has advanced under British guidance to a condition of peace and prosperity. A beneficent, although still a despotic Government, its legislative work, "proceeding within view of the people," has created

order out of disorder, commercial activity out of lethargy, harmony out of discord, continual peace out of perpetual war. For fifty years the nations of India, antagonistic by instinct, have lived in concord under the Union Jack, and the Empire to-day has reached a culminating point in her political progress, educational advancement, and commercial prosperity. If all goes as well with her in the future as in the past, the prophet need not be an exceptionally wise one who ventures upon the prognostication that India, under the power of the British name and of British administration and influence, has centuries yet before her of steady progress towards that ambitious goal which is the aim of her legislators and her peoples.

The Extremists wilfully forget these things : the Indian people have climbed ~~the~~ ladder of progress erected by the British, and having approached the summit, they are now competent, under British guidance, to ascend another rung, and another, and yet another. But the Extremists—having reached ~~the~~ precarious height to which the ladder has led them—would kick from under their feet, with an ingratitude and inconsistency which

are truly astounding, the very means by which they have climbed to that position, leaving themselves dangling betwixt earth and heaven, to drop eventually, if their purpose be achieved, down again to earth, to chaos and disorder, to the condition in which the people lived before the advent of the English.

Yes, to chaos and disorder; for if British influence were removed from India to-day, chaos and disorder would again be the condition of the Empire to-morrow. The antagonistic elements which form the component parts of her population still remain antagonistic, in spite of the harmonizing influences of that religious tolerance which is one of the greatest blessings of British rule. The "extensive police precautions" that are necessary at every great religious festival of both Hindus and Mahomedans are the best evidence of this. If British rule were removed, would the cultured Brahmin, the intellectual Jat of the Panjab, the warlike Mahratta of the Western Ghats, the educated Rajput, the highly civilized Parsi, and the progressive Mahomedan be able to form among themselves a Government sufficiently powerful to control the conflicting elements? It

is not likely—history and tradition have shewn and proved how impossible it would be for them to do so ; for do not they themselves constitute the elements of discord which have to be controlled ?

Before India is ripe for self-government, there is a hiatus in political training and governing capacity to be bridged. The existing racial divisions, the ignorance of the masses, and the prejudices of caste make representative Government, at least for the present, an impossibility. In the social life of the people, local questions of race and caste outbalance the principles of nationality ; and while these conditions prevail, self-government is out of the question. Indeed, little inclination exists among the majority of the people of India themselves to abolish customs which have been proved injurious to the community. “ We have in India,” said Lala Baijnath, “ the spectacle of a society split up into a number “ of infinitely small subdivisions, each holding “ itself aloof from the rest and trying to make “ its exclusiveness as strong as possible. Not “ only is the present system the parent of the “ disintegration now so common in Indian

“ Society, but it is also the root of many of the evils and the cause of so much misery now met with in India. In other respects, also, the descent from the ideal of the *Shasthras* to the actual of modern India is sufficient to drive a reformer to despair.”

It is true that the East India Company, when the government of the country came by necessity into their hands, had some vague notion that the people of India would be legislatively controlled by British agents up to a certain point, and that when this given point was reached the eventual government of the country would devolve upon the educated heads of communities, leaving the Anglo-Saxons free to return home to look after their own affairs. Whatever that strategic and diplomatic point may have been in the imagination of John Company, it has certainly never been reached.

In spite of the increasing educational facilities provided by the British Government, the masses of the people are still ignorant : India is still a divided nation ; the caste system of the Hindus, although fulfilling many useful functions,

is still a direct barrier to the ideal of a United Empire ; while the impossibilities of Hindu, Mussalman, and Parsi amalgamation still exist.

But the Extremists themselves provide the most potent argument, among all other arguments, in opposition to any possible scheme of self-government for the Indians. It is the case of the Irish Nationalists over again : Ireland would probably have had conferred upon her, long ere this, a considerable measure of control over her own affairs, had not the violence of her agitators, coupled with the divisions in her own ranks, rendered such a measure impossible. India has now arrived at a stage in her upward march, when our Legislators would be well-advised if they were to avail themselves, more than they do at present, of Native knowledge and intelligence as a guide in administering the affairs of the State, and a Native Consultative Council might therefore be considered with favour. The spirit of the Boycott movement has shewn, however, that those Extremists who are Anglicised have become the most truculent ; that many of the men to whom the Government ought to be able to look for administrative and legislative assistance are disloyal ; that

some of the best educated among them are likely to be influenced by personal interest and intrigue. To trust to any of these for expositions of the requirements of the masses would be most injurious. By their extravagant advocacy of imaginary political rights, they have disclosed their incapacity for government ; while, on the other hand, their blatant disloyalty to the British Crown is so unjust and illogical that it has become ridiculous. The Extremist is, in fact, putting back the clock of India's progress to an irretrievable extent.

It is not, however, in India alone that India's enemies are to be found. In the British Parliament the Extremist has already found his partisans among those of the quarrelsome and disaffected, known by the apt title of " Little Englanders." " Little Indians " would be an apt title, too, for their Indian compeers, and the two parties are well adapted for comradeship.

Lord Metcalfe said that if India were ever lost to Great Britain, it would be on the floor of the House of Commons. This statement was made about three-quarters of a century

ago, and meantime India is not lost, but has grown into a colossal Empire, though it is much to be deplored that the British Government is being so malignantly and tenaciously assailed in the House of Commons by Englishmen who hold the proud distinction of being members of that body.

It is impossible, considering the present relative position of the great Powers, that the sedition-mongers will come even within measurable distance of their desire—to see the back of the last Englishman ascending the gangway to the steamship's deck. The "anarchy and bloody chaos" which Mr. Morley tells us would result from this imaginary incident is therefore a mere phantasy as far as the immediate present is concerned. Such an event, however, is not an impossibility in the future. England, it must be remembered, has not during the last fifty years been engaged in any war with a European Power. Events may so shape themselves in times to come—and events march very quickly nowadays—that in spite of the Hague Conference and all the professions of peace now being so anxiously promulgated, the sturdy Islanders who

now dominate half the world, may find themselves once more facing the hostile armies of one, perhaps two, perhaps three, rival and ambitious nations.

It is immaterial to consider, in this argument, where the conflict is likely to take place. But it is not improbable, if so terrible a war broke out, that the ancient battle-fields of Northern Asia, on the high road to India, already trodden by countless hordes of fighting men in days gone by, would again be the scene of carnage. We can well imagine that the British, beset by overwhelmingly superior numbers, finding that with modern arms of precision they could no longer rely upon those brilliant cavalry and bayonet charges that once made their soldiers the dread of Europe, in the face of many adverse circumstances, might be driven back, and still further back, until they were forced to fight stubbornly to the last for their very existence. In that blackest hour of her life, England would call—not in vain, we may be sure—for all available fighting men from all the four corners of her vast Empire to reinforce her depleted regiments and to form new Army Corps. The sedition-monger of Eastern Bengal would have, at

this juncture, his wishes gratified ; for just as the Roman legions were withdrawn one by one from Gaul and Britain to fight for the protection of Rome itself, so would the British regiments in India—cavalry, artillery, and infantry—remove their tents like the Arabs and “silently steal away.” Then probably, one by one, the legislative gentlemen, the commercial gentlemen, the high officials, the governors, the agents, the collectors, would follow suit—called home to look after the affairs of their own country, to protect their own hearths, perhaps. Then, indeed, would the sedition-monger have his day. For a short while, one can well imagine, the government of the country would proceed smoothly enough—the clever Native officials who had been called upon hurriedly to occupy the higher seats, vacated by their superiors, being competent and quite willing to resume the course of administration so rudely interrupted by these untoward events: that is, of course, provided the sedition-mongers did not create a diversion, as they probably would, by claiming those seats for themselves.

Then, ere long, some great reformer would appear with the brilliant idea of a National

Assembly. Then, without a doubt, everything would go wrong with India: caste prejudices—hitherto slumbering under the tolerant yet powerful sway of the Englishmen—would be suddenly roused into vitality; Mahomedans, with a smouldering enthusiasm for the past glories of the Moghul ascendancy, would fall foul of their old enemies, the Mahrattas; the warlike tribes of the Afghan frontier, spoiling always for a fight, would come down from the hills in quest of their favourite pastime; the Sikhs, revengeful to this day for the massacres of Ferozeshah, would assuredly have something extremely unpleasant to say to the followers of the Prophet; the Parsis, rich but small in numbers—once more the quarry of covetous and unscrupulous men, as they were during their thralldom before the advent of the Englishmen—would be wedged into a corner, hardly knowing which way to look for deliverance from impending evil.

Not internally alone would India experience the fearful strain of her new condition—her “freedom,” as the sedition-monger would call it. The Empire has not ceased to be the goal of the ambitious nations of the north. On the contrary,

there has been no break in the continuity of her misfortune in this respect. It is the same now as it always was ; and we may be sure, could we but peep into the secret cabinets of the European bureaucracy, that we should find their many military and naval plans and many documents from foreign agents abroad, all tending to show the various methods by which India might be successfully attacked by sea and land. Nay, more, the Power or the Powers who succeeded in driving back the forces of Great Britain into the safe shelter of their own "tight little, bright little Isle," would be the first to appear at India's side of the Khyber Pass, with their fighting battalions : it would be the naval guns of those Powers that would first be heard booming over the placid waters of Bombay Harbour.

At this momentous time, in the hour of trial and in the period of direst need, we can well imagine that the sedition-monger, deprived by now of his source of income, probably robbed of his home, would

Groan for the Roman legions back again
And Cæsar's Eagles.

It is to be hoped that the cry will not be in

vain. Let us more sincerely hope, indeed, that no such tragedy, the possibilities of which, for the sake of argument, I have ventured to conjecture, will ever occur—either this or any internal eruption to mar the great deeds already performed by the British race for India's good, or to hinder the works of reform that are now proceeding. Let us hope that the sedition-monger will awake eventually to the absurdity, the treachery, and the ingratitude of his position, and that the Boycott movement will become merely one of those harmless Shibboleths indigenous to the Orient and tolerated for the sake of their quaint incongruities by the "Powers that be." In the meantime, let us hope that the industrious Banyah is permitted unhindered, as behoves a free and enlightened country, to sell "Brummagem" buttons at Crawford Market and Nottinghamshire ribbons at Hornby Road. Let us hope that India may never be unfaithful to her Anglo-Saxon friends. Let us hope, rather, that, under English guidance, she may have centuries of undisturbed peace, progress, and concord before her; that she may become, in fulness of time, a great united nation; that

she may rival the Occident in her refinements, her culture, her learning, her arts and industries, in the paths of medicine, surgery, science, philosophy, and the law. For here, in truth, we have the ambition of her legislators—the goal towards which all political effort is manifestly directed. By fidelity and confidence—*fide et fiducia*—all things are made possible for the Indian people.

SOME CAUSES OF THE UNREST.

I THINK I have shewn that it would be futile to disregard or to underestimate the fact that "unrest" exists ; nor can it be denied that the Extremists—I use the term Extremists advisedly as distinct from the People—have lost confidence in their Rulers, and that, in their wild career of blatant assertiveness, they seem to indicate that the British Government should relinquish India to them—a proposition which it would be ridiculous to entertain or discuss. Indeed, I make bold to say that even if the Extremists really regarded such a calamity as within the range of practical eventualities, they would be the first to pause and reflect on their own ribald aggressiveness.

The questions therefore that present themselves are—whether the "unrest" is national ; and

whether it exists throughout the Continent of India or is merely confined to a particular sect or area? And contingently with these propositions has to be considered, as of the most essential importance, both the cause and the remedy.

It being admitted that unrest exists, it is necessary to specify that it finds no sympathy with the important classes of the Indian community, namely, the Ruling Chiefs, Traders, Zemindars, and Cultivators; and with these may also be included the sixty millions of Mahomedans, who comprise, as compared with other classes, one-fifth of the population of the Indian Empire. Unfortunately, it has to be admitted that a section—though only a certain section—of educated Indians is responsible for the movement and these have endeavoured to incite unrest amongst their fellow-countrymen, the centre of the agitation lying in Bengal, where the blaze arose, and whence it has gradually spread to a few other areas of India. Indeed, it is much to be deplored that some of the very class that has been brought into greater prominence than the other classes by the Government, as a result of Western education, are responsible for the trouble.

No previous Government, either Hindu or Mahomedan, ever established a system of mass education ; in fact, prior to the inauguration of British rule, no idea of democratic freedom existed in India, and consequently even educated Indians had no thought of political rights, nor of asserting them. But the British Government, by establishing the system of education that has prevailed, based on Western thought and liberal principles, has created quite a new feeling. It has taught the people not only that they have acquired rights of a constitutional character—more particularly freedom of speech, which has been abused—but that the Government has incurred obligations to them that involve the right of domination in the rule of the country. Hence the assertiveness that impels them to encourage the belief that they must, by any means, constitutional or otherwise, get certain privileges which they have construed into rights, and their determination not to let Government alone till they have secured them.

Indeed, was it to be expected, when political history was taught in schools and colleges, and India's students were taught how England, France, and Western Europe gained their

freedom, that they would continue to revere the hoary traditions of India, regarding the Raja as the incarnation of the Deity and the King as the Shadow of God? Was it to be expected that they, in the words of the Great Sadi, would say "Aye" to the King, if he was to proclaim day to be night? Western education teaches, as a first principle, that freedom is everyone's right; that the Government by law established is for the welfare of the country, which is guided not only by Divine law, but also by constitutional laws. When the words, "that the Government is for the ryot and not the ryot for the Government," are on the lips of every person, combined with the doctrine that from childhood all are free agents and can demand their rights, which the Government is bound to concede, how can the repositories of that teaching be expected to content themselves with anything less than the fruits of such teaching?

Admittedly, the Indians are desirous of reaching the goal of their ambition, namely, Local Self-Government or "Swaraj," which is the direct result of Western education; and they are now trying to bring into effect the same methods

of agitation as have been used in Europe to secure the object they have in view. Education has given them a first lesson in freedom which cannot be forgotten ; it has also opened their eyes to what may be regarded as the possibilities of the future ; and every just and right-thinking man will doubtless agree with me that the unrest which exists amongst the educated classes—however individualised it may be—will not only last, but will increase day by day.

The question therefore to be considered is, how far are the demands now advanced legitimate and practicable ? In my opinion, the intellectual class are obsessed by the abstract principle that freedom is their right. They have not considered, nor have they forgotten, the immense differences that exist between Asia and Europe, more especially between England and India ; while the source of liberty and the distinction between constitutional methods and revolution have been completely lost to view. Nor, in conceiving their rights and in demanding them, have the Indian Intellectuals selected an opportune moment. They have evinced no gratitude for the rights already given to them : for their education ; for the great

advancement the country has made under British Rule, all of which have combined to raise them from a condition of absolute obscurity into a position of prominence, whereby they are now permitted to talk about political privileges as rights. The Bengalis—who have benefited more than any other race under British rule—have been foremost in spreading unrest and in trying to create hatred for the Government in the hearts of the masses. Instead of acting with wisdom, caution, and foresight, they have adopted violent and unlawful methods of procedure which will never be successful in aiding them to realize their ambitions.

The Government have given Indians a liberal education and have taught them freedom ; but the lesson of morality, which is a concomitant of freedom, seems to have borne no fruit. And yet there are no visible signs that Government regrets the steps it has taken in these directions, or that it in any way resents constitutional demands that are made on it in a lawful manner. Moreover, if we look at what the Government has done for Indians, we must be convinced that it has already given by degrees more privileges than they ever possessed

or ever hoped to possess ; it has gradually raised them to positions which transcend the wildest aspirations of their progenitors and has opened paths to educated Indians which were entirely closed under Indian Sovereignty.

With the record of progress under British rule before us, coupled with the principles that govern the present administration of the country, surely I am entitled to say that, if Indian politicians would only govern their methods by constitutional principles and discard what is subversive of those principles, they would, step by step, gain the confidence of Government and would attain the goal of their reasonable ambitions much sooner than otherwise.

The real cause of the unrest is education, or rather I should say "indiscriminate education." It was not brought into existence yesterday, but commenced from the day Western education received existence in India. As education advanced, unrest took root and grew. The first symptoms were noticed as far back as 1885, and took shape in the starting of what is now known as the "Indian National Congress." The organisers of that movement—the

men who brought it into existence and who emboldened the Natives to join it—were not Indians, but disappointed and disaffected Englishmen. It does not, however, follow that that organisation was started with evil intent, or that it had disloyalty, sedition, and opposition to Government as its mainsprings. I shall, for argument sake, suppose that the original intentions of the promoters of the Congress movement were *bonâ fide*, and that the welfare and prosperity of the country and the attainment of political freedom for India were their only aims. But the modes of procedure, from the very commencement, indicated that the scheme would be the distinct failure, both in its objects and in the results, which we are witnessing to-day.

In the spoken and the written word, the Congress leaders had only one theme—the imaginary evils of Government ; its high-handed administration ; its tyranny, the unsympathetic behaviour of its officials ; the poverty of India ; and the helpless condition of the ryot. These denunciations were couched in such violent language that the authorities began to hate their calumniators ; and the Government, which had been of immense benefit

to every section of the Indian peoples, began, in some quarters, to be regarded as tyrannical and unsympathetic.

The Congress leaders, from the very commencement, advanced an extravagant programme: their demands were not only absurd and impractical—and if realized would have been to the advantage neither of India nor the Indians, except possibly for the aggrandisement of the few who made them—but also the conditions of the country did not warrant the changes suggested; while for some classes the granting of the Congress demands would have been positively ruinous. Up to a certain stage, the Congressmen said:—“We desire a change in the administration and not in the kingdom: we are criticising the administration and not the administrators.” They lost sight of the fact that they were not living on English, but on Indian soil, and that if India were to become another Ireland, government would be an impossibility. Where the Government is of a different religion from, if not in conflict with, that of its subjects; where the subjects do not profess one religion, but are separated from one another by thought, habits, and customs; where the clash

of race, creed, and caste is sharper, deeper, and more enduring than in any other country in the Universe, government through the franchise is utterly impracticable. India has never had such a government, nor could it exist for a single day.

When the National Congress was first started, some wise and far-sighted statesmen prophesied that, though its policy appeared to be within constitutional bounds, the result would be sedition, and that the paper-wall which separates agitation from sedition would crumble and decay; then war would commence first with the pen, and finally—if that were practicable—with the sword. It is only the last stage of this prophesy that remains unfulfilled. Indeed, it is the proverbial tail wagging the dog—the latter representing the Congress and the former the Extremist, whose policy is one of thinly-veiled resistance to the Government.

These seditious and revolutionary ideas, which have long existed in the guise of demands for popular rights, have been unmasked since the Partition of Bengal. Before the Partition, there was no suggestion of Swadeshi or Boycott: since then there have been no party cries of equal vehemence. Yet, who can deny that the Partition

was a wise and necessary step, not only in the interests of Government, but for the welfare of the majority of the population of Eastern Bengal? There was no other practicable course open to the Administration. Still the Bengalis conceived such violent hostility to the measure that they at once commenced to oppose and hate the Government, and to start disloyal and defiant demonstrations, expressing rabid and malignant opinions in their speeches as well as in their writings. If this is not a spirit of sedition, pure and simple, what else can it be? The originators of these plots claim that their demands are essential for the advancement of the country, and that they will tend to improve its prospects; they try to impress upon the ignorant masses in Bengal and in the Punjab that by sacrificing every personal belonging and consideration, out of pure patriotic feeling for the country, they will become martyrs for the common cause. The illiterate folk in the Punjab and Bengal relish greatly what the Extremists teach them—that is, that Swadeshi and Boycott are great blessings for the country, because they will give an impetus to local arts and industries; that men who are idle will get occupation; that the poor will be saved from starvation;

that the wealth of the country will remain in the country instead of being drawn to Europe through commerce ; and that Swadeshi will safeguard India as the Great Wall protected China. To support their contentions, they make inflammatory speeches and hold up the Government as tyrannical looters, unsympathetic and dead to all feeling.

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This syrup, which is being slowly administered to the masses, at the first taste seems to be very sweet, but the admixture is poisonous. People who know no better drink it innocently, and the consequence must be disaster and ruin, if not political death, which the ignorant masses do not—nay, cannot—realize.

Now let me put some questions to these self-extolled patriots : Where were they in the years prior to the Partition agitation ? Had they then no sympathy and love for the Motherland ? If they had, where was it concealed ? Was it ever expressed prior to the Partition ? The fact is that, by virtue of numbers, the Bengalis enjoyed a monopoly of influence in the old Province of Bengal. The major portion of the Mahomedan community was kept in a state of positive subjec-

tion and dared not lift up their heads, nor even speak in self defence. But by the Partition, the Mahomedans are in a distinct majority in Eastern Bengal, forming as they do sixty-six per cent. of the population, and are consequently entitled to a greater share in the Administration. In this will be found the real reason why the Bengalis are moving heaven and earth to create ill-feeling in the hearts of the population; and for this purpose alone they commenced to exert every nerve to breed mischief. In every school, every youth was taught the same lesson, in every corner of the streets the same sermon was preached. Is there any genuine love for the Motherland in the cry that, so long as the Partition is maintained, the Swadeshi and Boycott movements shall last? Why, this very statement clearly proves that if the Partition, which is a constitutionally settled question, is upset to-day, the swadeshi and the Boycott agitation will cease to-morrow. Swadeshi is not, then, an end in itself, but a means to an end? And that end is not the welfare of the Motherland and the advancement of India—it is nothing nobler than the preservation of a selfish predominance in a Province where the

*Bengalis are in a numerical minority? To call this a patriotic agitation is a complete travesty of the term.

Then, again, why is the Boycott essential to the Swadeshi cause? The real meaning of Swadeshi is the improvement of local arts and industries, and the purchase of home-made in preference to foreign goods. This is a very laudable object, which every one appreciates, and a step which will prove advantageous to the country. Indeed, Government not only sympathises with genuine Swadeshi, but encourages local industries and helps the movement in various ways. In view of these facts—(a) Is it common sense, much less common gratitude, to boycott English goods? (b) Why, in the name of Swadeshi, is hatred created in the hearts of the masses against the British Government? (c) Why is physical force used to deter other persons from purchasing English goods? (d) Why are students in schools and colleges enrolled as National Volunteers to assist the boycott movement? (e) Why are the children and young men deprived of healthy education? (f) Why are they taught the poisonous lesson of disloyalty?

(g) Why are efforts made to create hatred and opposition to the Government in their hearts? In my opinion, these tactics do not evidence love for Motherland, but hostility to its true interests and a deliberate invasion of the first principles of political economy.

Another cause for the unrest which is often advanced is that the promises made in the Imperial Proclamations of 1858, of 1877, and of 1903 have not been fulfilled; that Indians have not yet been appointed to high posts and given their proper share in the administration; and that, though the Congress has been reminding the Government of its pledges for nearly a quarter of a century, the Government does not heed its representations for the development of the country.

There appears to be some slight truth in this contention; but I most emphatically contradict the statement that the Government has not carried out ANY of its pledges; indeed, the fact is that since British Rule commenced in India, the Government—spontaneously and voluntarily, without any demand being made by Indians and in deference to no pressure—has given Indians many high appointments in the administration of

the country. A reference to history, or a survey of the existing administration, especially on the Judicial side, will prove this statement.

The East India Company, although it was a commercial enterprise and only by force of circumstances became the Rulers of India, bore the claims of the Indians in mind and gradually improved their position; but no share in the Administration was given to them, though some were employed in small posts with insignificant salaries, till 1833, when the pay of the Tahsildars and Munsifs was not more than a hundred rupees a month. After that, the posts of Deputy Collectors, Deputy Superintendents of Police, and Sadar-us-Sudur were created, and their salaries were raised to four hundred rupees. Simply with the idea that the Natives of India might qualify for higher administrative appointments, in the year 1834, the system of education was placed on a very firm footing, and in 1854 Universities were created. In 1858, the East India Company ceased to exist and the administration of India passed into the hands of the British Crown: from that year India has gone steadily ahead and never looked back.

The administration of the country largely depends on its Legislature, and therefore the Legislative Council is a very important body, in which the Indians are included. When it was first inaugurated—taking the then state of affairs into consideration—only Native Ruling Chiefs and Notables were nominated ; but, subsequently, qualified men, irrespective of wealth or status, were included. Later, the elective system was introduced, and by that procedure picked representatives of the country were given seats on the Council, by which procedure the Government and the country have been greatly benefited. Instead of Rajas and Nawabs (who were only nominally Members of the Council), experienced, educated, and intelligent men, whom the country could trust, obtained seats. It is admitted that some of them have worked very capably and have materially helped the Government with their sound and mature advice. This procedure is still in force, and in every Department—Revenue, Judicial, etc.—several appointments have been created for Indians and the salaries of officials have also been increased : more than this, Indians have been admitted to the Civil Service, while the Provincial Service was specially constituted for them.

Indians now attain to high appointments of which their forefathers never even dreamt : they are Collectors in charge of whole Districts, Sessions and Civil Judges, Commissioners, Members of the Boards of Revenue, High Court Judges, and, in fact, sit beside Englishmen in every Presidency. On several occasions, Indians have officiated as Chief Justices ; and now Mr. Morley's scheme provides for the admission of two Indians to the India Council as advisers of the Secretary of State in the administration of India.

After studying all the evidences of progress which I have given, can any fair-minded subject of the British Crown say that the Government has not carried out very many of its promises and that the door for high appointments is closed to Indians ? It is true that Indians have not been given any military appointments, but we can safely take the Imperial Cadet Corps as the first step in that direction. The most serious point, however, that has to be considered is how it would be possible for a far-sighted Government like ours to appoint Indians to the Military Department, until such time as it is convinced that Indians honestly regard the British Government as their own Government,

and that they are really loyal. Do recent events in the Punjab and Bengal, added to the difficulties I have enumerated, encourage Government to give Indians Military appointments ?

The results obtained by allowing the Indians to join the Civil Service are before everyone's eyes. Can any Government desirous of retaining the country ever think of giving the command of its armies to Indians with safety ?

If the result of the education given to the Indians, and of their being raised to high positions, had proved satisfactory ; if the educated men and officials were real well-wishers of the Government and the country ; if they had appreciated the blessings of the British Raj ; and if they had proved themselves to be a grateful people, I am sure the Government would have spontaneously given them responsible posts in the Army.

But the bitter lesson that the pupils have taught their patrons is such that it is visionary now ever to think of the time when Indians will be largely seen in the glittering uniforms of the British Army. The unwise and short-sighted acts of the Extremists have gone a long way towards removing the confidence which had been created in the

mind of the Government by the past fifty years' hard work. They have not only harmed themselves and their community, but India in general.

Another reason is given for the existing unrest, and that is the passing of the Universities Act, which, it is said, will check education. It is even said that it is the desire of Government not only that there should be no improvement in education, but that, as far as possible, such obstacles should be placed in its way as would render higher education an impossibility. By virtue of the Act in question, it is asserted that Indians are precluded from expressing any opinion on any educational questions, and that, with these objects in view, the Government has increased the powers of its officials over the Universities and the number of official Fellows, while it has considerably reduced the number of Indian Fellows, imposing such strict and stringent conditions that several Indian schools and colleges cannot now be affiliated to the Universities.

Though there are defects, more or less, in the Universities Act, they cannot reasonably be attributed to any evil design on the part of the Government. The Government framed its legisla-

tion simply with the object of removing the defects which existed in the system of education. Is it not a depressing commentary upon our methods of political agitation that the deficiencies in the system of higher education, and the general unsuitability of the products of the high schools and colleges to face the stern battle of life, should for years be a matter of complaint ; and yet, that as soon as Government attempted to remedy these defects, it should be charged with the desire to subvert the whole educational system to the prejudice of the people of this country ? There is no greater tactical blunder than always to attribute evil motives to those who differ from you ; but this is the invariable practice of our Indian publicists.

If one reads the history of education in India, one will have to admit that the existence of an educational system in this country is due to the liberality of the British Government. Under neither the Mahomedan, nor the Hindu Sovereigns, was any attempt made to introduce a general system of education for all classes of Indians. The East India Company first sanctioned a yearly grant of a lakh of rupees for the purpose, and now the expenditure has been raised to several

millions sterling annually and is being increased year by year. Still I would point out that the expenditure under this head, taking the present state of prosperity into consideration, ought to be considerably larger and should be brought up to the level of the kingdoms of the West.

Another reason which is given for the unrest is the excessive taxation, which is being increased year by year, and which we are told is sucking the very life-blood of the ryot, reducing him to such a state of poverty and misery that he cannot combat plague and famine. Though there may be some truth in the assertion that in places the ryot is rather heavily assessed, the real unrest has nothing to do with it. Hardly anyone amongst the educated classes knows how cultivation is carried on and on what scale the ryot is taxed. Very few, if any, are aware of the real condition of the masses. The whole unrest is due to a sudden increase in the political ambitions of the educated few; and the complaints of excessive taxation, which are ridiculous in view of the lavish reductions of recent years, are only used as a disingenuous pretext for creating hatred against the Government in the hearts of the ryots.

THE UNREST AND THE REMEDY.

HAVING endeavoured to describe the present condition of unrest and the consequent disastrous results, the remedy has to be considered, which is a very difficult question to express an opinion upon. The Statesmen of Great Britain and India are all busily engaged in devising the means of subduing the present unrest, for the benefit alike of the Rulers and the Ruled, but they have hitherto been unable to discover the correct specific.

Some intelligent lovers of liberty and experienced men have expressed the opinion that, to end the unrest, the Government ought to satisfy the demands of the Extremists, and it is suggested that they should be given a larger share

in the Administration. The most important questions, however, which have to be considered are, whether the demands for self-government can ever be complied with? whether such a course could be pursued with safety? and whether it would be to the advantage of the vast inarticulate masses—whose interests Government are bound to protect? The replies are, of course, in the negative.

The Moderates amongst the agitators will not be satisfied until “there is some constitution like ‘the English Parliament in India; until, except ‘a very few offices, all the higher appointments in ‘every department are given to Indians; until ‘the Arms Act is abolished; until every Indian ‘(who desires to be) is made a volunteer; until ‘they are given the power of voting on the finances ‘of the country; and until they are consulted on ‘questions of peace and war with other Nations.” I can safely say that these wild aspirations will not even approach the vista of realization—at least, in the lifetime of the present generation: I shall leave the hereafter to speak for itself.

The Extremists, it goes without saying, will not be satisfied with anything short of “Swaraj,”

and if matters, we often hear it said, reach a crisis, there will be only one of two alternatives for the Government to adopt—either to give up India altogether or to repress the Extremists with an iron hand. This latter remedy would be a very harsh one, and it would be against the nature of Government to resort to such an extreme measure, nor would it meet the present situation. On the contrary, it would create hatred in the minds of the people instead of only in a small circle of Extremists.

I would now venture to suggest a middle course between the two extremes :

The Government should interpret more liberally its promises to admit Indians to all branches of the administration ; it should give Indians more Government appointments than they have had hitherto, and a larger share in the government of the country : the appointments should be given in every department, except the Military.

There ought to be a more equitable distribution of the Military charges between Great Britain and India—a question which is to be freshly investigated.

In the Legislative Councils, greater weight should be given to the opinions and suggestions of the Indian Members, more especially because they are acquainted with the conditions and requirements of their own country. There ought to be some improvement in the Budget Debate, as the non-official members now have no control over the income and expenditure of India: the Budget is placed on the table, cut and dry, and no votes are taken on it: the Indian Members bring their speeches written and read them out, and their views regarding the Administration are propounded, whether good or bad, but little heed, if any, is given to their suggestions. The reforms in the Supreme and Provincial Councils, which are now under the consideration of Government, should embrace not only an increase in the number of Indian Members, but the Indian Members should be given the power of voting on all important matters and also on the Budgets.

As the inclusion of two Indians in the India Council is now to become an accomplished fact, it is desirable to have two Indian Members on the Supreme Council and on each

Provincial Executive Council, who would be able to advise the Government on matters of importance, and they should be consulted on every question with the official members. These members would hold no portfolios and would discharge no executive duties. Their functions would be advisory, and they would form part of the full Council that would decide all questions of policy.

More money should be spent on Education than hitherto.

The District officials (as suggested by Mr. Morley) should mix more freely with the Indians socially, so as to enable them to get an insight into the feelings of Indians. In several cases, Government officials remain unaware of the real condition of the people, and—except the information that they get through their subordinates, which is very often unreliable—they never get into touch with Indian opinion. This deficiency would disappear if they were to come into personal contact with the people.

Social and friendly relations ought always to be encouraged and official authority should be kept on one side, to be used only in case of necessity.

In hardly any town in India is there any real friendship between the officials and the Indians, and though the British have been ruling for more than a century, race prejudices still exist and are unfortunately increasing. Consequently, very bitter remarks are heard about strained relations. The same feeling prevails to-day as at the commencement of the Raj, namely, that the British are the conquerors and the Indians the conquered, and there is no common brotherly feeling. Indians may have all the defects in the world, but they have as a nation always proved themselves to be a grateful people, who look only for sympathy and respect. In those cases where high Government officials treat Natives with consideration and receive them with respect, not only do the Indians look to them as their Rulers, but also revere and respect them, and would be certain, if necessity arose, to sacrifice their lives and belongings for them. Several instances of this nature are to be found in the history of India.

When the Mahomedans conquered India, the relations between them and the Hindus were very strained : the Hindus regarded them with hatred, and the Mahomedans treated the Hindus with

contempt. But we have only to look to the benevolent and far-sighted policy of the Great Akbar to realise the extraordinary change that he was able to bring about in the feelings of his subjects : he discarded religious prejudices, not only in words but in practice, and united the Hindus and the Mahomedans, making no distinctions of caste or creed : there were in the State as many Hindu Nobles, Officials, Advisers, etc., as Mahomedans, and the Hindus held an equal number of appointments in the Revenue, Judicial, Military, and Financial Departments ; while at public ceremonies and private gatherings, no one could discern the difference between the two races, so united were they.

The effect which this policy of Akbar had on the Hindus does not need recapitulation. In short, Akbar was worshipped by the Hindus as a Deity : the Hindu officials forgot all the ill-feeling and racial hatred which existed in previous times and commenced to work for him as they would for their own Raj ; indeed, the effect of Akbar's social treatment brought about such good feeling that affiliative relationships commenced, and by the marriage of Akbar the Royal family became relations of the Hindus.

Jehangir and Shah Jehan kept up this wise policy, and the Hindus in return sacrificed their very lives for the safety of the Delhi Kingdom. If that policy had been continued by the successors of Shah Jehan, India would have flourished for centuries under the Moghul banner; but things were destined to be otherwise.

If one reads the history of British Rule in India, he will be struck by the marvellous effect kindness and sympathy have had on Indian minds, which will be found contrasted in the despotic policy of Lord Lytton and the sympathetic rule of Lord Ripon: the treatment Lord Lytton experienced on the eve of his departure was quite different from the hearty and sincere ovations that Lord Ripon received when he left the shores of India. Lord Ripon's name, even to-day, is a household word with the Natives of India, amongst whom he is looked upon with the greatest affection and reverence.

Two years have scarcely elapsed since Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales visited India. By their gracious manners and innate sympathy, they won the hearts of all Indians, and the expressions of devotion

and loyalty which the Hindus and Mahomedans jointly offered could not have been more sincere and pronounced if sovereigns of their own race had been visiting the soil. Not only did the men participate in the rejoicings, but the ladies of every class and sect spontaneously joined in the demonstrations of loyalty and affection, and the names of the Prince and Princess of Wales have become synonyms for courtesy, sympathy, goodwill, and benignity in every Indian household.

His Royal Highness grasped the fact that the principal grievance of Indians is that there is a lack of sympathy on the part of many Government officials towards them, and that they are not treated with politeness and consideration. In His Royal Highness' speech at the Guildhall, when he summed up the impressions of his Indian Tour, he said :—" I cannot help thinking, from
 "all I have heard and seen, that the task of
 "governing India will be made the easier if
 "we, on our part, infuse into it a wider element
 "of sympathy. I venture to predict that to
 "such sympathy there will be an ever-abundant
 "and genuine response." Those wise words should form the keynote of British rule in

India; and if all Government officials were to follow in the foot-steps of Their Royal Highnesses, not only would the Indians obey them, but they would be prepared to slave for them.

Of course, there is no law by which common good feeling can be brought about, but the Government can give its officers "instructions," privately and unofficially, to associate freely with Indians. For instance, high officials, who have large districts under their charge, are looked upon as the representatives of the Viceroy, and when they are at their headquarters they should give one or two garden-parties a year, when Indians would have a chance of meeting Europeans on an equal footing and of exchanging views with them. With freedom of intercourse and its fruit—a better understanding of all classes of the people—most of the difficulties which now beset the Indian Government would disappear.

A LESSON FROM HISTORY.

IN the previous pages, I have endeavoured to analyse some of the causes of the unrest that undoubtedly exists in India, and to indicate what I believe to be the most effective remedy. But I think those of my countrymen, who are not amongst the Irreconcilables, would gain a truer insight into the existing situation if they were to read and re-read the history of the growth of British power in India and study the principles on which it is based. There is no more common weapon in the armoury of Anti-British invective than to represent the British Raj as the outcome of greed for territory and lust of dominion. Nothing could be farther from the truth. British power in India expanded not in a "fit of absence

of mind," but in direct opposition to the repeatedly-expressed desire of successive Courts of Directors.

Writing nearly three-quarters of a century ago, Lord Metcalfe, in a retrospect of the influences that prevailed at the time, said that it would be found that the Natives of India had not the vaguest possible conception of what the "Company" was with which their rulers were making treaties and to which they were ceding territory : they spoke of it as "Koompanee Bahadur" or "Koompanee Jehan Bahadur," and were content with the knowledge that it was an invisible power from beyond the *kala pani*—a power which was symbolically represented by a sword in one hand and a ledger in the other ! And as time progressed, the Natives had great faith in "Koompanee Jehan," for they felt that the new power was true and that there was something in it that they had not known before, and they went on quietly from generation to generation, still satisfied with the shadow of the Great Moghul. English education was a thing just spoken of as a vision of the future ; while steam-engines, railroads, and the electric telegraph were unheard of. Even enlightened

Natives of India knew little or nothing of the power of Parliamentary debate or of Whigs and Tories struggling for ascendancy.

In that state of affairs, the British public—knowing little and caring less about the affairs of India—were content to leave her to her own resources, even Ministers of the Crown excusing themselves from meddling, upon the plea that the Company would be offended : consequently, collisions between the Crown and the Company were few, and there was not unusually some personal influence at the bottom of those few. “John Company” was himself of no party ; indeed, the Directors—who could sit in Parliament if they could find a constituency to elect them—were seen voting against one another, sometimes even on Indian questions. India was then really a nauseous drug in the Parliamentary pharmacopœia, which few could be induced to taste and none relished : the result was that with ignorance in the East and insouciance in the West, the course of events was unruffled and a spirit of absolute complacency prevailed. “John Company” collected his revenues and paid his dividends ; and though he was

compelled eventually to abandon his trade monopolies, he was still regarded as a great merchant prince. The theory which was adopted was that the British mission in India had for its objective the improvement of the people of the country up to a point at which their fitness for self-government would be recognized, when the British would withdraw from the scene, preserving only a reciprocity of commercial interests. This was broadly stated in a despatch (written by Mr. James Mill) from the Court of Directors to the Government of India on the occasion of the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1833 ; and it has from time to time been repeated that upon this basis rested the British tenure of India and that the position of the English in the country was that of guardians or stewards. The people of India still regarded the great Moghul as the fountain of honour and the Company as a sort of benevolent agent or administrator, who managed things as they had never been managed before, paid his servants with great regularity, and seldom or never broke his word.

The Mutiny of 1857, however, induced a new order of things, and made a difference in the position of affairs : it abolished for ever even the

prestige of the Moghul, and the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 declared that while there was no design to interfere with existing relations, all that was due from the Company would be discharged in full by the Crown. Thus, as the Great Moghul, for sometime previously, had only existed in name, there was really no substantial difference in the state of affairs, except that the suppression of the insurrection afforded the British a great opportunity—they had in effect re-conquered India, and therefore the occasion had been thrust on them of asserting the supremacy of the Crown of England and eventually of assuming a distinct title of Indian Royalty. The latter event was, however, deferred until the introduction by Disraeli in the House of Commons, on the 7th of February, 1876, of the Royal Titles Bill; and in order better to convey the relation of cause and effect, it will not be out of place to summarize here the history of that event, which so thoroughly changed the constitutional character of the Government of India and gave birth to declared Imperialism. Disraeli had some idea that it would be an offence against the Royal prerogative if he stated what the new title was to be;

but it is said that the Queen—ever since the Duchess of Edinburgh had claimed precedence over her sisters-in-law on the ground that hers was an Imperial whilst theirs was a Royal title—desired to be styled Empress of India. On the other hand, most people objected to a change in the Queen's designation. Why, it was asked, should the successor of Egbert wish to be a modern Empress ? To insert India in the existing form of the Royal title would adequately meet any real necessity for a change. The Imperial title was also surrounded by evil associations, and it suggested that Imperialism, or personal Government, tempered by casual appeals for support to the Democracy or the Army, over the head of Parliament, was the end aimed at by the Ministerial policy.

Disraeli's haughty refusal to communicate the new title to the House of Commons was met by a motion that no progress should be made with the Bill until the title was revealed ; but he eventually yielded the point, promising to give the necessary explanation before the Bill was read a second time. The debate on the second reading showed clearly that the House of Commons was hostile to the Bill ; but as the Government gave a

pledge that the title should be used in India only, the second reading was carried. This pledge was, however, soon broken ; for the Proclamation was made, not that the new title should be used in India only, but that it might be used everywhere, save in the United Kingdom. The Peers were as reluctant as the Commons to sanction the adoption of any exotic titles by the Crown ; but pressure was brought to bear on them for the purpose of overcoming their threatened opposition.

Lord Shaftesbury was summoned to Windsor in the early Spring, and as it was twenty years since he had been the Queen's guest, his Diary records that he assumed that the invitation was brought about by the controversy then raging over the Royal Titles Bill. Under date the 12th March, 1876, he wrote : "I dread the visit—the cold, "the evening dress, the solitude, for I am old "and dislike being far away from assistance "should I be ill at night. The Queen sent "for me in 1848 to consult me on a very "important matter. Can it be so now ?" The next entry showed his foreboding to be correct, for on the 14th March following he wrote : "Returned from Windsor. I am sure it was so,

“though not distinctly avowed. Her Majesty “personally said nothing.” But though the Queen did not discuss the views he expressed to her, a Lord-in-waiting formally requested him to communicate them to Mr. Disraeli, who paid no heed to them ; and, accordingly, Lord Shaftesbury, on the 3rd of April, 1876, moved an Address to the Queen in the House of Lords, praying her not to take the title of Empress, urging that in time it would lose its present impression of feminine softness, and be transformed into “Emperor,” whereupon “it must have an air military, despotic, offensive, and intolerable.” Lord Shaftesbury observed :— “Loyalty itself was a sentiment, and the same “sentiment that attached the people to the word “ ‘Queen’ averted them from that of ‘Em- “press.’ ”

Quoting from Hodder's *Life of Lord Shaftesbury* (Volume III, pages 367—371), in the division that occurred in the Lords, though the Government obtained 137 votes in favour of what the *Saturday Review* called “a vulgar and impolitic innovation,” eight Dukes and a large body of “habitual courtiers” voted

with Lord Shaftesbury in the minority of 91. The heated debates that took place did not, however, affect the personal popularity of the Sovereign : the dismal predictions of the opponents of the measure were not verified, because their protests doubtless convinced the Court that any ostentatious display of Imperialism by an ancient constitutional monarchy would lead to a recrudescence of the Republican agitation.

On the 1st of January, 1877, the assumption of the additional title became an accomplished fact, and the daily papers were filled with glowing accounts of the Proclamation of the Queen as Empress of India (Kaiser-i-Hind) at Delhi, in the presence of the Viceroy and the great Feudatories of the Empire of India. The ceremony was accompanied by salvoes of artillery ; and a banner and medal were given to the Princes of India to commemorate the event, five of the most powerful of whom—Holkar, Scindia, Cashmere, Travancore, and Obdeypore—were granted rank, typified by salutes of twenty-one guns, equivalent to that of the Nizam ; but as the Viceregal salute was raised to thirty-one guns, Holkar and Scindia, who

claimed to hold higher status than the Viceroy in their own dominions and equal rank with him elsewhere, went away discontented. The ceremony represented the final triumph of the new system which had been inaugurated by Lord Canning—the system by which, instead of ruling India by a paternal bureaucracy, whose aim was to sweep away all magnates who stood between it and the people, the hereditary rights of the Native Princes were recognized, and they themselves were admitted as corner-stones in the fabric of Empire, of which the “Kaiser-i-Hind” was now proclaimed and was intended to remain thereafter the apex and the crown. *Finis coronat opus!*

It has recently been said in the House of Commons that India was won by the sword, and must therefore be held by the sword. That was a mischievous statement—all the more mischievous because it was untrue. It is true that India was won by the sword—from the French, the Dutch, and the Portuguese. There were but few, if any, cases during the existence of the East India Company in which territory was actually added to the British Empire as a result of hostilities purposely pursued for territorial acquisition.

The fact cannot be too forcibly impressed upon the minds of the Indian people, that when the first small body of English gentlemen, constituting the British East India Company, landed on the shores of this Empire in 1600, they came not for conquest but for trade. As traders they remained, until a greatness that they did not anticipate was thrust upon them. The Government of India became their destiny, *volens volens*, and right royally did they perform their task. The amelioration of the people's condition, the development of the industrial resources of the country, the purification of justice, the civilizing of barbarous tribes, the suppression of unholy rites and cruel abominations, the general diffusion of enlightenment and truth, these formed but a few among the many good deeds performed by the English settlers under the hot sun of the East, isolated from those of their own race, in a climate where there are no ordinary incentives to exertion, amidst dangers and difficulties calculated to have deterred the brave and to have repelled the resolute.

Throughout the career of the East India Company, they evinced no desire for territorial

possession. Indeed, in William Pitt's Bill for the Better Administration of India (1784), it was clearly stipulated that

As the pursuit of schemes of conquest was repugnant to the wish, to the honour and the policy of the British Nation, that it was not lawful for the Governor-General in Council of Fort William, without the express authority and concord of the Court of Directors, or of the Secret Committee, either to declare or commence hostilities, or to enter into any treaty for making war against any of the Native Princes or States in India, or any treaty guaranteeing the dominions of such Princes or States, except when hostilities have been commenced or preparations actually made for the attack of the British Nation in India, or of some of the States and Princes whose dominions it shall be engaged by subsisting treaties to defend.

In the operations of the East India Company, the trader was everywhere dominant—in their councils at Home as well as in the directions given to their servants abroad. They made it a set and steadfast policy not to retain the slightest possible hold of the soil. The multiplication of factories was anathema to them ; a fort was an abomination ; and although they nearly lost their monopoly for neglecting to fortify their factories, the Company at Home blamed their representatives in India for even thinking of territorial acquisition and of military defensive measures. Indeed, so little did those commercial gentlemen

think of fighting the Natives of India that, during the War of Succession following Shah Jehan's reign, they actually imported ordnance and munitions of war—on a “pure mercantile bottom,” as the saying is—thinking that the rival princes would pay handsomely for goods which could be turned to such profitable account.

Eager as the Company were, however, to curtail the number of their factories, they continued to increase : there was some sort of natural law which seemed to insist upon the Englishman's progress in the East. From the Bombay coast, where they were first established, the factories extended to Agra, then on to the coast line of Madras, and presently on to the shores of the Bay of Bengal. This gradual extension of the Company's sphere of influence was neither the result of commercial cupidity nor of territorial ambition. When it became necessary, in the fulness of time, that the English traders should exercise an administrative control over the affairs of the countries in which they had settled, unaccustomed as they were to their new rôle as territorial lords and incipient rulers, they were at first

staggered by the responsibilities that had been thrust upon them: they were anxious to confine their possessions to Bengal, being afraid of an expansion towards Madras. Even Clive himself shrank from any further extension of the Company's dominions. "My resolution was, and my hopes will always be," he wrote in 1765, "to confine our assistance, our conquests, and our possessions to Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. To go further is, in my opinion, a scheme so extravagantly ambitious and absurd that no Governor and Council in their senses can ever adopt it."

It was for the purpose of peaceful commerce, therefore, that the English first came to India. It was by trading treaties with Ruling Princes—permission to erect factories in the Moghul dominions having been granted by Jehangir in 1613—that they secured their first foothold on Indian soil. When it became necessary afterwards to defend those concessions against the French usurpers, those commercial gentlemen proved themselves as handy with the sword as with the pen. Then came the expediency of defending those Princes from whom they had obtained trading rights against the attacks of

their enemies; and so, in course of time, the English gentlemen became soldiers—supporting and protecting the monarchical power that then ruled Hindostan—as well as men of business. Next followed the Subsidiary Treaties with friendly rulers, who undertook to provide the British with additional fighting men in the event of their being attacked. But the English gentlemen were compelled, by the exigencies of their position, to become diplomats as well as soldiers, and the history of the so-called “conquest” of India—an eventuality that was imposed on those gentlemen—is but the history of a superb diplomacy.

In all cases it was diplomacy first—war afterwards, if diplomacy failed. It was only when repeated negotiations had failed, it will be remembered, that the British guns at Plassey opened fire on the forces of the Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah. Subsequently, there is no better instance of war supervening on diplomacy than that given in the despatches of Lord Cornwallis concerning the “infraction of the Treaty of Peace by Tippu Sultan.”

The peaceful offers for a settlement and the diplomatic messages that passed from

the British camp to that of Tippu Sultan, during a period of months, before the Allied Forces finally sallied out to meet his forces, would have filled a Blue Book. That circumstance, taken with the discovery of the Malartic Proclamation in the Mauritius, which disclosed the plans of Tippu Sultan to drive the English out of India with the aid of France, left no other alternative to the British than that of annihilating the great entity who had conceived the ambitious design of becoming Emperor of Hindostan. Unfortunately, the Moghul power had already reached a condition of decay, and if evidence were needed of the necessity that justified the policy of Wellesley, it is found in the fact that the Nizam and the Peishwa—Mahomedan and Hindu rulers—combined with the British to rid the country of a personality, whose achievements and power had already become a menace to the peace of the land. In short, the Tripartite Treaty had two common and indivisible objects, namely, the annihilation of Tippu Sultan and the expulsion of the French—objects that were apparently essential to the peace and prosperity alike of the three powers represented by

the Tripartite Alliance. It is unnecessary here to go into the ultimate results of that war: they are too well known to need repetition.

As a result, however, of the wars into which the English commercial gentlemen were forced, they only supplanted after all rulers who were aliens like themselves. It seemed almost an act of Providence that brought this body of astute Englishmen into India at the time of India's greatest need. For centuries past the tide of conquest had been pouring into the land from the north—from the Oxus and the Jaxartes, from the borders of the Aral Lake, and from the snow-capped mountains had come the overwhelming conquerors. From time immemorial, India has been the goal of the ambitious nations of the north. After the Aryans themselves came the Greeks and the Arabs, and then the Tartar hordes. And the various nationalities—with different creeds, different religions, different manners—which these continual inroads had brought into India, made it absolutely necessary that upon some alien race more powerful than their own should devolve the ultimate control of the diversified elements. It seemed to be a Divine

mission, which was forced upon the English settlers. The English came peacefully, unostentatiously, and quietly; and they sternly, generously, and determinedly set about their task of reform—peacefully always, until compelled, for the sake of their own safety and of their own honour, to replace the pen and the ledger by weapons of defence, in a crusade of peace for the well-being, happiness, and prosperity of the people of India. Sir William Kaye wrote: “The poorest coolie is entitled to all the solemn formalities of a judicial trial; and the punishment of death, by whomsoever administered and on whomsoever inflicted, without the express decree of the law, is a murder for which the highest functionary in the Company’s territories is as much accountable as a sweeper would be for the assassination of the Governor-General in Durbar.”

Surely, then, looking at India as she was then and as she is to-day, it is not an exaggeration to speak of the advent of the English as an act of Providence! The Portuguese had preceded them—adventurers who were bound by no laws, restrained by no scruples, insolent and violent,

the true enemies of this country, with the seeds of decay already perceptible in whatever constitutional principles they possessed. The French and the Dutch were there also ; but, fortunately for India, neither of them made much headway in their schemes of Empire—fortunately for India, advisedly, for the volatile, pleasure-loving, uncommercial Gaul has never yet shown an aptitude for colonization, and the Hollander is much too unsympathetic, too insulated, too abstracted, to show sufficient energy for conducting anyone's affairs except his own. There was only one Power in the world which was able to save India ; and an English writer has truly said that “the great structure of our Indian Empire has been reared as no human intellect would have designed, as no human hands would have fashioned it ; it has been reared for us as for a chosen people.”

The more all the circumstances of the rise and progress of the British Power in the East are considered, the more palpable and obstinate appears the scepticism which

would attribute so stupendous and mysterious a movement to anything but the special interference of an Almighty Providence for a purpose commensurate with the grandeur of the design. Sir William Kaye has informed us that, "Naturally disposed towards slow and cautious movement, the East India Company were hurried onward by an irresistible force, which made them in spite of themselves, merchant princes and great territorial lords." Wonderful, indeed, was the manner in which the road was cleared for the advance of the Company. Decay and debility, corruption and disease, in the body politic, were in evidence; and nothing in the land had any vitality and progressiveness in it save that one little body of London merchants, which seemed beyond the reach of intrigue or of direct assault to injure or repress. Hard knocks and repeated discouragement gave them new courage, new strength, new determination.

The initial attempt of the settlers at legislative control was wonderfully successful: it was successful because it was based on the Constitution of the British people, with the sanction of the Mother

of Parliaments. Lord Cornwallis collected the scattered fragments of Government which he found in the country, and to that which was flimsy and transient he imparted substance, strength, and permanence. After much profound thought, with the advice and assistance of the Company's officials, he laid the foundation of India's existing Constitution, and for the first time in her history the Empire had a code of written laws and regulations, to which all possible publicity was given, with legislation proceeding, as has already been said, "in the presence of the people." The Statute Book was opened to every man in the land who had the will and the ability to peruse it. The legislature, the executive, and the judicial powers were divided under separate control—that great protective principle of a free people to which no despotic government in India had as yet submitted; and the Cornwallis system, like the system that exists to-day, respected in every way the usages, the prejudices, and the predilections of the people, and was most honestly and humanely devised for their protection.

Within a few years—a decade to be precise—John Company had been credited, in a folio

Blue Book, with many useful public works, including embankments, canals, systems of irrigation, roads, bridges, buildings, factories, and docks. In Bengal there was soon hardly a rood of land not under cultivation. The jungle had entirely disappeared. "A man may go for miles in any direction," said one of the writers of those days, "east and north of the metropolis, and see plains succeeding to plains, where there is not one bigah of unproductive soil, and where many thousands of bigahs give their return of two crops in the year, without irrigation, and without that careful labour which seems indispensable, in the Upper Provinces, to successful agriculture. More new bazaars will be found to have been established within the last thirty years than old bazaars to have decayed. The circulation of money in the interior of such districts is very considerable. The number of men who derive competence and consequence from the soil is large." It might have been added that the provinces under direct British control had then enjoyed nearly a century of unbroken peace. Something might have been said too, about the abolition of the evils peculiar to the old Ryotwar system, and the introduction

of new regulations which "declared revenue to be subordinate to justice," the discarded method having made justice entirely subordinate to revenue, thus giving to the Native revenue officers the power to "punish and confine" and to take from the ryot annually all that he could pay. Under the British regulations this mighty oppression ceased. All compulsion and restraint on the free labour of the ryot were removed, and freedom in trade, as well as in agriculture, became an established fact. By the Regulations enforced by the Madras Board of Revenue, the Collectors had the paramount duty imposed upon them of restraining their Native subordinates and of protecting the liberties of the people. Proprietary rights were recognised which had not been recognised before.

The old estates of the country were passing away from the ancient proprietors, who, we are told, "stood bewildered, confused, dismayed, scarcely knowing by what strange juggle they were suddenly, but almost imperceptibly, deprived of their rights." Many, as their descendants related, died of broken hearts. Others, incapable

of silent endurance—high-caste and high-spirited Rajputs—boldly asserted their rights in the teeth of the fraudulent Dewans. The mild and equable new rules of the East India Company put a stop to frauds which had brought about this unhappy state of affairs, security was given to person and to property, the violent and the lawless were repressed, and every encouragement was given to peaceful industry. “I have just marched along the strip of country,” wrote a distinguished English official in 1852, “reaching from the Sutlej to the Jumna by Hansi and Hissar. You must remember that country when it was inhabited by a wild and lawless set of people whom no one could manage. Native Chiefs would not take the lands at a gift. Our own troops were frequently repulsed by the communities of Rangurs and Bhuttees, and others, who lived in large fortified villages, subsisted by plunder. Now the country is thickly inhabited and well cultivated, and the most peaceful that could possibly be. That land which before was worthless now bears a high value, and a people who were before lawless now yield implicit obedience to the laws.”

These small, and in themselves unimportant, matters are mentioned as results of the all-embracing, beneficent rule of the English, because it is the small matters that are soonest forgotten. What was done in one district for the better utilization of the land and for the reform of the people, was repeated in others—in different ways, perhaps, to suit the different conditions, but the story was practically the same in each particular. Some unseen agency seemed to be at work for India's good ; but the English official was always there in evidence. More chapters than one might be filled with a bare enumeration of England's small—now almost forgotten—deeds of social reform. Her great deeds can never be forgotten, save by those who, having eyes, will not see, and having ears, will not hear. Canal irrigation was one of the first big schemes that occupied the attention of British officers—this as a prevention of drought and the recurrence of those periodic famines which had devastated Upper India. The Western and Eastern Jumna Canals, the Ganges Canal, the Solani Aqueduct, and the Bari Doab Canal were the initial undertakings ; and then came the works known as the Cauvery Anicut—works intended to secure, by embankments, the waters

of the Cauvery river in the Southern Peninsular for the purposes of irrigation. Similar works for the Godavery and Kistna rivers, in the northern parts of the Madras Presidency, followed in succession. While these great engineering operations were in progress, the improvement of internal land communication in all parts of the country engaged the thoughts of the Indian Government. Foremost among the early achievements in this direction was the Great Trunk Road, from Calcutta to Delhi, thence to Lahore and Peshawar, its total length having been estimated at 1,423 miles ; the Bombay and Agra Trunk Road was the next venture ; and afterwards came the mail route between Calcutta and Bombay and the construction of new highways in the Madras Presidency. The establishment of a Civil Justice Code, upon the basis of simple British equity ; the suppression of thuggee and dacoity, after centuries of privileged and systematic murder, by which the country lost annually some thousands of its inhabitants ; the conversion of robber castes ; the civilization of savage tribes ; the abolition of Suttee and of child murder, were some of the benefits conferred by the British upon the people of India.

Those astute, painstaking, plodding gentlemen of the old East India Company have gone—the Company itself has long since retired into the limbo of ancient history ; but the Government of the country is still in the hands of a similar type of men—soldierly civilians, we may call them, less commercial and more diplomatic than their predecessors, and better educated and more carefully trained. They are still, however, the same upright proud, manly men, full of the grit out of which empires are made. In them the good deeds of the John Company have been extended and maintained. Under their management the legal and legislative machinery has been modernized and improved : it has become more complicated and more machine-like, perhaps, but its efficiency is beyond a doubt, and education has been diffused throughout the Empire. . . Numerous institutions have been reared for the people's good : the electric telegraph has been established vast irrigation projects have been undertaken ; more than 150,000 miles of roads are maintained by the public authorities ; the commerce of the country has increased enormously during the last few years ; and we have now nearly 30,000

miles of railways, which not only serve for conveying passengers and merchandise, but which also, in times of drought, assist tremendously in the work of relief, while, at the same time, they provide facilities for people in congested districts to migrate to less populated areas, thus eradicating what has been in the past one of the gravest causes of famine. To be logical—indeed, to be consistent—the leaders of the Boycott movement should place their embargo on the locomotives from Wolverhampton, on dynamos from Manchester, on steamships from the Clyde and the Tyne, as well as upon the lace from Nottingham, the knives and forks from Sheffield, and the buttons from Birmingham. Were they to do so, however, the utter absurdity of their procedure would be so palpable that the movement would be dead in a fortnight.

The Indian Empire has always been the admiration and the envy of the European world. In 1847, France, under the burden and trouble of a new empire in Algeria, sought counsel from the East India Company as to the true mode of governing Mahomedan subjects.

Austria looked on with respectful wonder, gravely confessing to a right understanding of all the elements of England's national grandeur, except her marvellous Empire in the East. The Duke of Newcastle, in a speech delivered at Haileybury in the summer of 1852, stated that, while travelling in the Austrian Tyrol, he fell in with a very intelligent Austrian General, who, in the course of a conversation regarding the national resources of England, said that he could understand all the elements of England's greatness, except her Anglo-Indian Empire, and THAT he could not understand: that the vast amount of administrative wisdom which the Government of such an Empire demanded baffled his comprehension.

Russia sent forth her Princes to see the great marvel for themselves, and to tell on their return how the British conquered kingdoms and how they retained them. She, with ill-disguised chagrin, tried to believe the falsehoods of England's enemies, and yet knew in her inmost heart what was the wisdom and beneficence of British rule. It is recorded that Prince Saltikoff told an English officer—most probably Sleeman—

who had been exerting himself to bring about the suppression of Suttee in Rajputana, that he thought it a pity to suppress anything so romantic, for that in proportion as such customs as those were abolished, the people of India would cease to be interesting.

Von Crlich, writing under date, 21st February, 1843 (*Travels in India*, Vol. II, pp. 36-37), said :—

“ It is a happy feature in the character of
 “ the Englishman that he preserves an attach-
 “ ment, which he has once conceived, during
 “ his whole life. To his practical good sense,
 “ his desire to acquire solid knowledge, and
 “ his elevated moral standard, England is
 “ indebted for her greatness and her power. I
 “ have never seen these virtues so predomi-
 “ nant as in this country. The more I learn
 “ of England's mode of Government here,
 “ the more I am compelled to admire the
 “ talent of the English for colonization. It is
 “ an error to suppose that the British Power in
 “ India has attained its meridian height : on the
 “ contrary, there are everywhere indications of
 “ a further development, founded on duration

“and stability ; but it may be approved, with
 “equal confidence, that this universal Empire is
 “very far from having attained its concentrated
 “form and reached its extreme boundary. It is
 “not in the power of the English to say, ‘ So
 “far we will go, and no farther.’ The necessity
 “of securing their own existence will compel
 “them to make the Indus, or rather the Soliman
 “Mountains and the chain of the Himalaya, their
 “boundary and entirely to subdue the kingdoms
 “in the interior. Want of nationality among
 “the Indians, the despotic Government of their
 “Princes, and the degenerate morals of their
 “Courts, will favour the attainment of this end ;
 “and the more gradually it is done, the less will
 “be the sacrifice and the more inconsiderable
 “the dangers.”

Italy, through Sismondi, says :—“ Such as they
 “are, however, the English are still the best mas-
 “ters that India has ever had. Wherever in this
 “vast Continent their dominion is direct, it is a
 “real benefit. They have re-established security
 “and justice ; they have given the people a

“feeling of duration, and of something to look
 “forward to; and exactly because they keep
 “themselves apart, because they do not wish to
 “direct everything, to change everything, they
 “have permitted Indian civilization under them
 “to resume its natural progress. Agriculture is
 “flourishing, the arts are cultivated with ease,
 “population and riches begin to increase, intelli-
 “gence makes some progress, and European
 “opinions engraft themselves naturally and
 “gently on the old ideas of India; in short,
 “the conquered people have learnt to defend
 “the foreign rule: the Native Army is formid-
 “able, and there is little probability that if the
 “road to India were opened to the Russians,
 “they could sustain a struggle against the
 “English.”

In the face of the opinions thus expressed by
 foreigners—representing nearly all the European
 Powers—we think too little of the mighty
 Providence which, out of a petty mercantile
 adventure, has evolved the grandest fact recorded
 in the history of the world.

The most malevolent constituents of the tribe
 of sedition-mongers, if they pause and reflect on

the influences of this myterious interposition of the British in India, must realize the practicalities of good and the comparative absence of evil in the administration of India. If, on the other hand, their worst grievances, real or imaginary, be placed in the scale against what might have been under any other European dominion—indeed, if the balance be set between their wildest aspirations and the benefits that India has received—the latter form assets that absorb the former and obliterate them to an extent that renders them insignificant.

It can easily be realized that the benignity and benevolence which are the most striking characteristics of British rule in India are being perpetuated now under influences that would drive any other Government into the adoption of harsh measures to suppress the demon of sedition which a certain few are endeavouring to let loose on the country : the Government, however, is conscious of its own strength, the very consciousness of which appears to be its weakness ; for while its wrath is incurred and aggravated, it stays its hand and desists from striking harshly. It is much to be deplored that these irresponsible

orators do not realize that the power and strength to silence them are allowed to lie dormant only as an act of clemency on the part of the Government, and that therefore their outpourings are regarded with feelings of commiseration, instead of resentment. If, therefore, these self-extolled patriots would bring their faculties of reason to bear on the penalties they have incurred and the clemency that has so far warded off the just retribution that should overtake them, they must admit that their action has the character of extreme cowardice; for, whatever their utterances, they know that the Government is a tolerant and sympathetic one which errs on the side of forbearance and that

“ The awful shadow of some unseen Power

“ Floats, though unseen, among us.”

To insult and defame that Power, sheltered behind the consciousness that it is slow to anger—indeed, forgetting that whenever it chooses to put forth its arm to silence its defamers, it can do so effectually—and to indulge in the immunity from consequences which arises out of such clemency, is the most unpardonable form of impudence that patriotism has ever assumed.

The Natives of India owe to the British Government not only the blessings of protection from external war—and also, still more important, from internal anarchy—but the privilege of being voiced in the Government of the country through representatives elected and selected. That there are deformities in the present system, there can be no doubt—maturity has not yet been attained; but the course of events has shown that maturity is the goal of the efforts of our administrators, and therefore there is a very wide discrepancy in the allegations that are being made and the earnest that has been given in the history of the past of what the future is intended to be.

Reverting, finally, to the promises made in the Proclamations of 1858 and of 1877, it has to be borne in mind that those promises were in no way influenced by the people of India—indeed, they were undreamed of: they were spontaneously conceived and made by a Government that, throughout the course of its rule, has been consistently Imperial in its policy of not only educating the people of the country to share in the work of administration, but also of elevating them to the position for which they had

educated them. The demands therefore that are now being made under the influences of seditious writing and malignant oratorical displays are as uncalled for as they are ridiculous ; and if the Government took a firm stand now against advancing the Natives of India any further in the administration—or their policy retrogressed—on the ground that they had forfeited the consideration of the Government, they would have no cause for complaint. Indeed, any other Government, European or Asiatic, would long ere now have silenced the vehemence and vituperation of the Extremists by announcing that there would be a reversal of the policy of advancement that had favoured them from 1833 forward.

If evidence were needed of the just and considerate influences that have controlled, and continue to control, the actions of our Rulers, it is found in the fact that they have been uninfluenced by the "unrest" that has manifested itself—however personal its character—in the work of representation in the India Council which they are now initiating, after careful and mature deliberation for, it may be said, some years past. If the actions of the Government were at all

present crisis controlled by ordinary human influences, the Extremists would have to chew the cud of remorse if they were told that, owing to the seditious outpourings of the self-created leaders of public opinion in the Punjab and Bengal, the Government had decided to defer the question of Indian representation ~~the~~.

In conclusion, it comes to this that, if the people of India wish to make further advancement in the administration—the Army, the Civil Service, etc.—they will have so to regulate their actions and their utterances that the Government may be inspired with confidence as to their *bona-fides* and learn to feel that in them it has a loyal and law-abiding people who are able to appreciate the constitutional character of the Government and to approach it on all occasions when a representation has to be made in a moderate and reasonable spirit by petition, respectfully and temperately worded, or by any other recognised form of appeal. In other words, the sooner they reform their methods and utterances and change from blatant Extremists to calm and reasoning Moderates, the sooner will Indians of all classes find themselves within measurable distance of the realisation of their legitimate demands. *Verbum sat sapienti!*



14.8.58

